GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4265
ANSWERED ON:28.03.2017
Soil Health Card Scheme
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Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any parameters have been laid down to issue soil health cards to the farmers in the country and if so, the details thereof along with the nodal agency entrusted with the work of issuing soil health cards;

(b) whether there is a gap between the number of farmers targeted to be given soil health cards in different States and the number of farmers actually given these cards;

(c) if so, the reasons thereof along with the adequate funds released under the soil health card schemes to all the States;

(d) whether technical helps/assistants are getting employment under the soil health card scheme and if so, the details thereof; and

(e) whether excess use of pesticides is causing adverse effect on the health of soil and if so, the details thereof and the corrective steps taken in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE

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(a): The Government has introduced Soil Health Card (SHC) Scheme with an aim to provide soil health cards to all farm holdings across the country once in a cycle of two years. Uniform norms of 10 hectares for rainfed areas and 2.5 hectare for irrigated areas constitute the grid for soil sample collection. Uniform norms of testing 12 parameters is followed namely major nutrients (N, P, K), secondary nutrients (S), micro-nutrients (Fe, Zn, Cu, Mn & B) and others (pH, EC & OC). The State Government through its Department of Agriculture is nodal agency to issue soil health card to farmers.

(b) & (c): So far against the target of 14 crore cards distribution, 6 crore cards have been distributed and remaining cards are under printing. Adequate funds have been released to all States, funds amounting to Rs 23.89 crore, Rs 96.44 crore and Rs 126.47 crore have been released during 2014-15, 2015-16 and 2016-17 respectively under the scheme.
Contdâ€¦2/-

(d): The Soil Health Card Scheme has a provision for contractual services of two staff in each lab for soil analysis.

(e): To prevent excess use of pesticides, Integrated Pest Management approach through Central Integrated Pest Management Centres to produce biological agents for release in the fields, conserve natural bio-control agents, promote bio-pesticides as an alternative to chemical pesticides and advocate judicious and safe use of chemical pesticides as a last resort. These activities are implemented through Farmers Field Schools (FFSs), 2 days and 5 days training programmes and season long training program for State Agriculture Extension Offices and NGOs/ Private Bodies. A 'Grow Safe Food' campaign has been initiated disseminating message of safe and judicious use of pesticides to farmers and other stakeholders. Package of practices for control of pests and diseases in 87 crops have been revised to include techniques to reduce dependence on chemical pesticides and encourage use of bio-pesticides and other alternative plant protection measures.

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